

## CLAIMS

I claim:

1        1.        A method of manufacturing a decorative flower pot  
2 having an outer peripheral surface with embossed decorations,  
3 comprising the steps of:

4                forming a female mold cavity of a flower pot, the mold  
5 cavity having walls and contours disposed on said walls, said  
6 contours corresponding to a desired embossed design; and

7                vacuum forming a plastic flower pot in the mold, the flower  
8 pot having embossed decorations on the outer peripheral surface  
9 of the flower pot.

1        2.        A decorative flower pot produced according to the method  
2 of claim 1.

1        3.        The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of  
2 clamping a plastic sheet in a frame and heating said plastic  
3 sheet.

1        4.        The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of  
2 placing said plastic sheet and frame over said female mold  
3 cavity while said sheet is in an elastic state.

1        5.        The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of  
2 imprinting a design on the outer peripheral surface of said  
3 flower pot using a rotational offset printing process.

1        6.        The method of claim 1, wherein the vacuum forming step  
2 further comprises the step of removing air from said mold cavity  
3 by applying a vacuum in order to force the heated plastic sheet  
4 against the walls and contours of said mold cavity, thereby  
5 forming a plastic flower pot having an embossed design on the  
6 outer peripheral surface of said flower pot.

1        7.        The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
2        forming an embossed wrapper having an inner surface and a  
3        decorative outer surface, the embossed design on said wrapper  
4        being substantially identical to the embossed decorations on the  
5        outer peripheral surface of said flower pot so that said wrapper  
6        engages the embossed design on said flower pot when wrapped  
7        around said flower pot; and  
8        bonding the inner surface of said wrapper to at least a  
9        portion of the outer peripheral surface of said flower pot;  
10       whereby said flower pot has a decorative design embossed on  
11       the outer peripheral surface of said flower pot undistorted by  
12       the vacuum forming process.

1        8.        A decorative flower pot produced according to the method  
2        of claim 7.

1        9.        The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of  
2        vacuum forming a plastic flower pot having a plurality of sides  
3        and contours.

1        10.    A method of providing a flower pot with a decorative  
2 exterior, comprising the steps of:  
3            vacuum forming a plastic flower pot having an outer  
4 peripheral surface;  
5            forming a wrapper having an inner surface and a decorative  
6 outer surface; and  
7            bonding the inner surface of said wrapper to at least a  
8 portion of the outer peripheral surface of said flower pot;  
9            whereby a decorative flower pot is formed, said flower pot  
10 having a decorative design disposed on the outer peripheral  
11 surface of said flower pot, the design being undistorted by the  
12 vacuum forming process.

1        11.    The method of claim 10, wherein the step of vacuum  
2 forming includes forming an embossed design on the outer  
3 peripheral surface of said flower pot.

1        12.    The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of  
2 embossing a design on at least a portion of the outer surface of  
3 said wrapper.

1        13.    The method of claim 10, further comprising wherein the  
2 step of vacuum includes forming a plurality of sides and  
3 contours in the flower pot.

1        14.    A decorative flower pot produced according to the method  
2 of claim 10.

1        15.    A method of forming a flower pot having an undistorted  
2 image disposed on the outer peripheral surface of the flower  
3 pot, comprising the steps of:

4            providing a plastic sheet having an upper surface and a  
5 lower surface;

6            forming a compressed image on at least a portion of the  
7 lower surface of said plastic sheet, the image being a visually  
8 distorted representation of a desired pattern;

9            clamping said plastic sheet in a frame;

10          heating said plastic sheet;

11          placing said plastic sheet and frame over said female mold  
12 cavity while said sheet is in an elastic state; and

13          removing the air from said mold cavity by a vacuum process,  
14 forcing the heated plastic sheet against the walls and contours  
15 of said mold cavity;

16          whereby a plastic flower pot is formed having an  
17 undistorted image of a desired pattern on the outer peripheral  
18 surface of said flower pot.

1        16.    A decorative flower pot produced according to the method  
2 of claim 15.

1        17.    The method of claim 15, wherein said step of forming a  
2 compressed image on at least a portion of the lower surface of  
3 said plastic sheet further comprises the step of compensating  
4 for the distortion undergone by said plastic sheet when  
5 stretched by said vacuum process.

1        18.    The method of claim 15, further comprising the steps of:  
2            imprinting a grid on a plastic template sheet, said grid  
3 having a multitude of identifiable sections; and  
4            vacuum forming a flower pot template using said grid  
5 imprinted template sheet, said grid being distorted by said  
6 vacuum forming.

1        19.    The method of claim 18, further comprising the steps of:  
2            overlaying said template over a flower pot having a desired  
3 pattern disposed thereon;  
4            determining each grid section color imprinted on said  
5 template; and  
6            transposing the color of each distorted grid section on  
7 said template to a second and subsequent plastic sheet;  
8            whereby a compressed image on at least a portion of a lower  
9 surface of said second plastic sheet is formed.